

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the interview held on July 7, 2006 with the undersigned and with Matthew Trippel, a representative of Sulzer Euroflamm US Inc., the assignee of the application. During the interview, the claims, several references and rejections were discussed.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claim 2 as being of improper dependent form and claim 121 for an informality. Applicants have cancelled claim 2 in accordance with the Examiner's instructions. Applicants have amended claim 121 as shown and believe that it is now in good form.

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 6, 7, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 24, 26, 27, 30-39, 43, 48, 51, 52, 54, 56, 60, 61, 64-68, 71-83, 85, 86, 90, 92, 94, 97-100, 102, 103, 106, 107, 110-119 and 121 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter. Applicant has amended the claims as shown and believe that they are now in good form.

On pages 4 and 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected various claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), as being anticipated by Hirayanagi et al. '367, Payvar '953 and Sullivan '711.

Hirayanagi discloses a friction plate constituted by a core plate, and friction members fixed respectively to opposite surfaces of the core plate. The friction member has oil passages, extending therethrough from its inner peripheral surface to its outer peripheral surface, and oil grooves which are open to the inner peripheral surface, but do not extend through the friction member. The area ratio of the oil grooves to the oil passages is 25% to 100%; and the width of the oil groove is not larger than the width of the oil passage. The length of the oil groove is not less than 1/4 of the length of the oil passage. It is not necessary that all of the oil grooves have the same length. Preferably, the width of the oil passage, as well as the width of the oil groove, is not more than 3 mm. The oil passages and the oil grooves may be inclined relative to the radial direction.

Payvar discloses a groove pattern for the friction facings of a wet clutch to equalize the face temperature of the friction facings and thus increase the thermal capacity of the clutch where there is continuous slippage. The groove pattern includes one or more circumferential grooves dividing the friction area into two or more annular bands with radial grooves in each band which increase in number from the inner band to the outer band.

Sullivan discloses a segmented friction member for use in a clutch assembly. The friction member is circular and constructed from a paper-like friction layer. An oil groove extends completely through each friction member segment defining inner and outer segments joined by first and second bridges positioned adjacent the fluid inlet and fluid outlet, respectively.

Applicants note that each of the cited references fails to teach of Applicants' independent claims as now presented, all of which require a plurality of first channels or areas, at least one of which has a second channel in fluid communication therewith for permitting fluid to flow between a first area and a second area. Applicants' claim 1, for example, recites that at least one of said first channels or areas or said second channel or area is generally radially extending between either said first edge or and said second edge. The references, whether viewed alone or in combination, fail to teach of this feature.

"Generally radially extending," as used in the amended claims is not intended to cover to the multiple serpentine channels defined by segments joined by bridges situated at the inlet and outlet, such that each serpentine channel appears to be generally parallel to a circumference of an edge of the material, as specifically shown in Sullivan, as shown in Sullivan's Fig. 1.

None of the references, whether taken alone or in combination, teach of the claims as now pending. In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe that these claims are now in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required by this paper, or to credit any

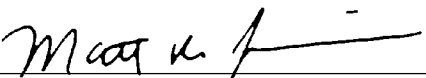
overpayment, to **Deposit Account No. 50-1287**. Applicants hereby provide a general request for any extension of time which may be required at any time during the prosecution of the application. The Commissioner is also authorized to charge any fees which have not been previously paid for by check and which are required during the prosecution of this application to **Deposit Account No. 50-1287**. (Should Deposit Account No. 50-1287 be deficient, please charge any further deficiencies to Deposit Account No. 10-0220.)

Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the undersigned via telephone with any questions or comments regarding this case. **Applicants respectfully request an interview with the Examiner is this Amendment does not place this case in condition for allowance.**

Reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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